



State of Utah

Department of  
Natural Resources

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Division of  
Oil, Gas & Mining


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August 20, 2004

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Paul Baker, Senior Reclamation Biologist 

SUBJECT: Site Inspection, U. S. Energy, Velvet Mine, M/037/040, San Juan County, Utah

Date of Inspection: July 1, 2004  
Time of Inspection: About 3:00 to 3:45 p.m.  
Conditions: Mostly clear, 80's  
Participants: Paul Baker, DOGM

**Purpose of Inspection:**

I wanted to see how vegetation was progressing through early summer.

**Observations:**

Vegetation is progressing nicely. I found numerous seedlings in nearly every part of the reclaimed area although they were more numerous and larger where topsoil was spread. Photo 1 is typical of areas where topsoil was spread, and Photo 2 shows a slope where soil was not applied. Photo 2 also shows the benefits of ripping on the contour: most of the seedlings are in the depressions created by ripping.

I did not visit the vent holes or the pond, but I did look at one of the access roads. Like the mine area, vegetation on the road was coming along well.

The manure was not spread real evenly at the mine site, and it's easy to tell where it was placed (Photo 3). I could not tell that there was an increase in desirable vegetation in these areas, but there were definitely more weeds. This should be checked again to see if there were beneficial effects of applying manure.

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U. S. Energy/Velvet Mine

M/037/040

Inspection Date: July 1, 2004; Report Date: August 20, 2004

Near the entrance to the mine site, I found two claim markers. The information on a paper attached to one of the markers was:

April 9, 2004

W. M Sheriff [not sure of this last name]

Box 357

Wylie, TX 75098

972-233-2214

LOC MON UT 9, LM UT10

### **Conclusions and Recommendations:**

I do not recommend any remedial action at this time. The Division and the operator should continue to monitor the site, including the areas where manure was applied to see if there are long term benefits. With continued rainfall this summer (which it appears the site has received), the vegetation should become well established. There has been a little erosion, but it is minor.

Because of the claim markers, the Division and operator should also look for signs of any mining or exploration activity occurring in the reclaimed area. No one has yet submitted a notice of intention for conducting these operations in the area, so this kind of activity would be in violation of the Mined Land Reclamation Act.

PBB:jb

cc: Ted McDougall, Monticello BLM

Fred Craft, U. S. Energy

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## ATTACHMENT

### Photographs

M/037/040, Velvet Mine, U. S. Energy

Inspection Dated: July 1, 2004; Report Dated: August 20, 2004



**Photo 1. Vegetation in an area that received soil over the waste.**



**Photo 3. One of the contour terraces where manure was spread.**



**Photo 2. A slope that did not receive topsoil. Note how most of the vegetation is in the ripper marks.**



**Photo 4. Claim markers near the entrance to the mine site.**